



## City Neighborhood Council

c/o 700 Fifth Ave, Suite 1700, PO Box 94649, Seattle WA 98124-4649

Telephone: (206) 684-0719 Fax: (206) 233-5142 TDD: (206) 684-0446

### DISTRICT COUNCILS:

- Ballard
- Central
- Delridge Neighborhoods
- Downtown
- East
- Greater Duwamish
- Lake Union
- Magnolia/Queen Anne
- North
- Northeast
- Northwest
- Southeast
- Southwest

October 29, 2008

Seattle City Council  
P. O. Box 34025  
Seattle, WA 98124-4025

Re: 2009-2009 biennial budget

To members of the City Council:

Now that the Mayor has released his budget proposals, the City Neighborhood Council finds that much of our June 25 letter to you still applies, and thus we attach it here. We also offer the following additional comments:

Release the NMF evaluation. In last year's budget, the City Council required the Department of Neighborhoods to conduct an evaluation of the Neighborhood Matching Fund. This evaluation has not been released, and it should be, in order to be of some use in the budget process.

"Earmarking" strikes the Neighborhood Matching Fund. The Neighborhood Matching Fund was designed to encourage the widest possible range of citizen initiatives, but in recent years, the amount of NMF available on this basis has declined as the Mayor or City Council have earmarked parts solely for designated purposes (proposed this year for the youth violence initiative and the food action plan). While these and other causes are worthy in themselves, they are eligible anyway for NMF, where they should be weighed with other worthy applications. If there is a desire to encourage certain topics within NMF, don't use earmarks, but consider giving extra rating points, as was done in the early years of NMF.

Neighborhood planning outreach funds. The Department of Neighborhoods outreach funds currently budgeted are too low to be successful, and should be greatly increased, with some made available to grassroots groups, which know their neighborhood best and can get the most outreach out of limited City funds.

Major institutions program. Better funding of this Department of Neighborhoods program is needed to ensure independent review of the proposed expansion of major institutions. Past cuts have made the advisory committees too dependent on administration by the major institutions themselves.

Increased community center hours. CNC appreciated the City Council's addition of \$500,000 for this purpose last year, and regretted that the Mayor diverted it to other uses. Even amidst the budget crunch, it can't make sense to leave our beautiful community centers closed to early users (often seniors) and late users (often teens).

Webcast and broadcast of boards and commissions. As outlined in our June 25 letter, please provide modest funding to make it possible to broadcast or webcast more board and commission meetings. Cable franchise fees, not taxes, can fund this essential element of open government.

Translation and interpretation. As outlined in our June 25 letter, please assist neighborhood organizations in reaching out by paying for interpreters and by offering the names of interpreters who a neighborhood organization can ask to volunteer or to serve on a low-cost basis.

This letter was adopted, without opposition, at the October 27 City Neighborhood Council meeting.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Chris Leman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Chris" and last name "Leman" clearly distinguishable.

Chris Leman, Chair  
City Neighborhood Council  
cleman@oo.net

Attachment: CNC's June 25, 2008 letter on the budget

cc: Mayor, Department of Finance, Department of Neighborhoods